

26 December

This morning at the Museum of Santa Maria clei Fiori and at the National Museum. Looked especially at Donatello, whom I admire above all. At this exhibition of his work, originals or casts, you feel such an extraordinary and such a victorious struggle against the antique tradition. . . . Amazing preference for the male body and odd understanding of the forms of the child. That little *Amor*, one foot half raised over a snake that the other is crushing—the short legs still weighed down, deformed by the badly tied breeches, which are falling down and half uncovering him, the belt remaining around his waist — as if for an ornamental complication; the awkward and charming gesture of his little arms in the air.

The ornamented nudity of his *David*; the flavor of the flesh; the disappearance of the muscles between the bone structure and the total expression; emaciation, greenness — the set purpose, etc. Return to it as to a subject of study.

28 December

Saw this morning Roberto Gatteschi, who tells me of his desire to establish an international review, of his volume of poetry, of still another, of his novel.

He would like a preface by Coppce; but he is intelligent and if he talks of Copp6e this is because he is ill informed. In Paris ho would certainly belong to the *Mercur*. . . .²

When you talk to him of the French writers he knows, ho cites Daudet, Copp6e, Bourget, Zola.

After dinner I joined Roberto Gatteschi at the Arena, where we were to find d'Annunzio. The latter arrives around ten o'clock, and an hour later we leave the circus with Orvieto, who introduces me to his friend. Together we go to the Gambrinus; d'Annunzio indulges with obvious greediness in little vanilla ices served in small cardboard boxes. He sits

beside me and talks gracefully and charmingly without,
it seems to me,
paying any special attention to the role he is playing.
He is short; from
a distance his face would seem ordinary or already
familiar, so devoid
is he of any exterior sign of literature or genius. He
wears a little pointed
beard which is pale blond and talks with a clearly
articulated voice,
somewhat cold, but supple and almost caressing. His
eyes are rather

² *Le Mercure de France*, a literary review (at first
monthly, then fortnightly) founded in 1890 and edited by Alfred Valletta. It
published all the
vigorous young writers and introduced many foreign
writers to France. The
whole symbolist school rallied around this eclectic
periodical, which soon be-
came one of the leading influences in French letters. In
1893 it founded a pub-
lishing house by the same name, which was for many years
to issue Gide's
books*